

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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MONTREAL FOR ICAO, PARIS FOR UNESCO, ROME FOR FODAG,

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SUBJECT: GENEVA GROUP(GG)

VIENNA FOR UNIDO

REFS: A) GENEVA 2900; B) GENEVA 2202, C) STATE 298228

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1. THIS MESSAGE RESPONDS TO MISSION REQUEST FOR OUR VIEWS RE GG MEETING (REFTEL A) AND FOLLOWS UPON HELPFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH DCM ABRAMS DURING HIS RECENT CONSULTATIONS HERE.

2. WE AGREE WITH UK THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE A REASONABLE CASE FOR CONTINUING THE GG, AT LEAST AT THE PRESENT TIME, BUT BELIEVE THAT THIS QUESTION MUST BE THOROUGHLY AND FRANKLY DISCUSSED AT JUNE GG MEETING AND THAT ANY GG FUTURE (ROLE AND GOALS), INCLUDING FUTURE OF GG/CL, MUST BE DEFINED AS REALISTICALLY AS POSSIBLE. CONSIDERATIONS THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DEVELOPMENT OF PAPER ON THIS ISSUE BY GG (GENERAL) CO-CHAIRMEN INCLUDE:

A. GENEVA GROUP CONSULTATIVE LEVEL GIVES COHERENCE TO AN INFORMAL BUT CONTINUING EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ON THE PART OF MAJOR DONOR COUNTRIES ABOUT THE SCOPE, EFFECTIVENESS AND COST OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. (IT HAS BEEN OUR OPINION THAT THIS "ORGANIZED CONCERN" DOES NOT ESCAPE THE ATTENTION OF SA EXECUTIVE HEADS.)

B. THE LOCAL GROUP ASPECT HAS PROVED TO BE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE GG MECHANISM. ALTHOUGH ITS EFFECTIVENESS REFLECTS THE EXTENT TO WHICH MEMBERS (PARTICULARLY THE CO-CHAIRMEN) UTILIZE IT, THE LOCAL GROUP CAN AND HAS CONTRIBUTED VERY POSITIVELY TO THE RATIONAL FORMULATION OF MAJOR DONOR VIEWS - IF NOT AGREED POSITIONS - ON BUDGETS, FINANCIAL MATTERS, MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT. THE LOCAL GROUP HAS ALSO PROVIDED A MEANS OF MAKING SPECIAL STUDIES ON MATTERS OF COMMON CONCERN (PARTICULARLY TRUE OF GG GENERAL IN THE PAST).

C. IN RECENT YEARS THE INFORMATION EXCHANGE ELEMENT OF GG MECHANISM HAS, IN OUR VIEW, PROVED INCREASINGLY VALUABLE. IN VIEW OF SHEER SIZE OF THE SA COMPLEX AND THE LIMITED STAFF RESOURCES OF MEMBER COUNTRY MISSIONS IT IS MORE OR LESS IMPOSSIBLE FOR A SINGLE MISSION TO KEEP INFORMED ABOUT ALL AGENCY DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY MARKEDLY AFFECT PROGRAM, EFFICIENCY, ECONOMY AND NATIONAL INTERESTS. IN THIS SITUATION THE GG INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE FUNCTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SERVES ALL MEMBERS.

D. THE MISSION'S REPORT OF THE SUCCESS ENJOYED BY THE WMO GG THIS PAST YEAR WAS IMPRESSIVE. FURTHER, WE FULLY AGREE WITH MISSION EVALUATION OF IMPORTANCE OF REVIEW OF SA BUDGETS PRIOR TO MAJOR MEETINGS.

E. LACKING A GENEVA GROUP IT WOULD OF COURSE BE POSSIBLE

TO BRING TOGETHER MAJOR DONORS IN EVENT OF SUDDEN NEED FOR CONSULTATION ON BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM MATTERS IN SA HEADQUARTERS CITIES. OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, THE EXISTENCE OF A CONTINUING BODY, USED TO WORKING TOGETHER, SERVES AN IMPORTANT CONTINGENCY PURPOSE.

3. IN CONNECTION WITH DEVELOPMENT OF CO-CHAIRMAN'S PAPER, MISSION MAY ALSO WISH TO REFER TO U.S. POSITION PAPERS ON "ROLE AND GOALS OF GENEVA GROUP" PREPARED FOR THE 1971 AND 1972 GG/CL MEETINGS.

4. AUSTRIA HAS INDICATED ITS DESIRE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE GG ON THE GROUND THAT VIENNA'S STATUS AS A THIRD UN CITY HAS BEEN APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE BY UNGA. HOWEVER, AUSTRIA'S ASSESSMENT RATE IN THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES IS ABOUT ONE HALF OF ONE PERCENT, WHEREAS THE CRITERION USED IN FORMING THE GG WAS A ONE PERCENT ASSESSMENT RATE. (SWITZERLAND IS A MEMBER NOT BY VIRTUE OF BEING A UN HEADQUARTER CITY BUT BY CONTRIBUTING MORE THAN ONE PERCENT

TO CERTAIN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES.) THERE IS THE FURTHER CONSIDERATION THAT IT WOULD BE A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT TO BRING AUSTRIA INTO THE FOLD, SINCE OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT VERY WELL ALSO WANT TO JOIN. (NEW ZEALAND, FOR EXAMPLE, ASKED TO BECOME A MEMBER A FEW YEARS AGO.) ON THE OTHER HAND, WE RECOGNIZE A RELUCTANCE TO SAY NO TO AUSTRIA. THIS ISSUE WILL HAVE TO BE FACED AT THE JUNE GG/CL MEETING, BUT WE HAVE NOT YET FORMULATED A U.S. POSITION. (OUR RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRIAN APPROACH TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR SUPPORT WAS NON-COMMITTAL.) WE WOULD WELCOME ANY VIEWS THAT MISSION MAY BE ABLE TO OBTAIN FROM OTHER GG COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY UK, AS WELL AS MISSION'S OWN VIEWS OR RECOMMENDATION. ONE POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE TO DEFER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACTION FOR ANOTHER YEAR ON THE GROUND THAT UNTIL THE GG DETERMINES ITS FUTURE ROLE AND GOALS IT IS IN NO POSITION TO DISCUSS ENLARGEMENT.

5. WITH RESPECT TO AGENDA:

A. WE ARE TENTATIVE PLANNING UNDER "OTHER BUSINESS" TO PRESENT SHORT PAPER ON UN SALARIES. THIS WOULD DEAL WITH THE PROFESSIONAL SALARY PROBLEM. WE DEFER TO MISSION AND GENEVA GG ON WHETHER TO DISCUSS G-LEVEL SALARIES.

B. WE HAVE BEEN PLANNING TO PRESENT PAPER ON ILO. WOULD APPRECIATE MISSION VIEW AS TO WHETHER THIS STILL DESIRABLE.

6. WE THINK EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN NEED OF TWO AND ONE-HALF DAY GG/CL MEETING. AGENDA THIS YEAR APPEARS TO BE MUCH SHORTER THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS, BUT POTENTIAL FOR EXTENDED DISCUSSION CERTAINLY EXISTS IN WHICH CASE THIRD MORNING COULD BE NEEDED FOR REVIEW OF MINUTES. GIVEN POSSIBLE COMPLEXITY OF GG/CL XIII WE SUGGEST PLANNING FOR TWO AND ONE-HALF DAYS. WE WOULD DEFER TO MISSION ON THIS QUESTION. KISSINGER

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